

# Marrying Mark

Violette Kimball Dunn

## CHAPTER IX

Elise emerged, cool in pastel chiffons, under a huge hat. Her dark, rather heavy eyes were veiled as they rested on him. They had passed since Elise met him. It seemed to him that he had been shut up here with her for weeks. "I'm afraid I don't understand," he told her. "I suppose it's stupid of me. Do you mean somebody we know is talking about somebody? They generally are, aren't they? Who is it this time, and what are they saying?" "They're talking about you, darling, of course. Did you imagine you could bring an attractive young woman from nowhere, like a rabbit out of a hat, and put her unchaperoned into your house, and nobody would talk about it?" "Mark drew up by the side of the road and stared at her. "Do you mean—are you by any chance telling me—that Lucy Tredway—" "Who else? Really, Mark, I admit as if we hadn't been friends for years. It isn't fair—when I miss

you. You are so—so sort of sweet. Mark. But when others are involved—"

Mark asked a surreptitious question of his wrist watch. He was appalled to find only half an hour had passed since Elise met him. It seemed to him that he had been shut up here with her for weeks. "I'm afraid I don't understand," he told her. "I suppose it's stupid of me. Do you mean somebody we know is talking about somebody? They generally are, aren't they? Who is it this time, and what are they saying?" "They're talking about you, darling, of course. Did you imagine you could bring an attractive young woman from nowhere, like a rabbit out of a hat, and put her unchaperoned into your house, and nobody would talk about it?" "Mark drew up by the side of the road and stared at her. "Do you mean—are you by any chance telling me—that Lucy Tredway—" "Who else? Really, Mark, I admit as if we hadn't been friends for years. It isn't fair—when I miss

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Elise so anyway—" "Mark was horrified, after the fashion of men, to see her loose one hand from the still struggling hat and wipe her eyes on a gay bit of chiffon. "I—I'm frightfully sorry. I'm probably a clumsy brute—" He laid his hand over hers on the big hat, and held it closely. Elise looked up at him from undampened lashes. She even smiled plaintively. "No, darling," she sighed. "It's just that you don't always think of course, I know you can't go him of being. "Dashing around to parties. Amusing yourself like that. But surely don't bark at me. After all, I'm nobody could criticize you for coming to see me! As a matter of fact, this is an adult age. It's criticism that made me hunt you up. It's terribly hard to tell

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fill him because of her or her great dark eyes or her subtle perfume. "I'm afraid not tonight," he said. "You see, I must be getting home to the children." Elise chose one more from her bag of tricks. "Are you furious with me?" managed what sounded faintly like a sob. "I suppose it's what we must expect when we try to help those we love—I've stayed awake night trying to decide whether or not I should tell you about this—and now—" "And now?" said Mark pleasantly, "run along in and catch up on your sleep." "You're angry—" "Not a bit. Why on earth should I be?" Tossing off the whole thing as if it were less than nothing. He was really wondering how much longer she intended standing there talking inanities. He could forgive her, suddenly, for the whole silly business. Even for

making him miss his swim. "Good-bye—" She tried to put heartbreak into it, and loneliness. Mark turned as if on a released spring, and held out his hand. "Come over sometime," he grinned. "If you're not afraid of our reputation." Real tears sprang to her eyes. She turned quickly away and walked up to the house. She was afraid he would see the tears. They were of rage, and even a man would know the difference. By the time she turned at the door, Mark and the roadster had vanished.

To Be Continued

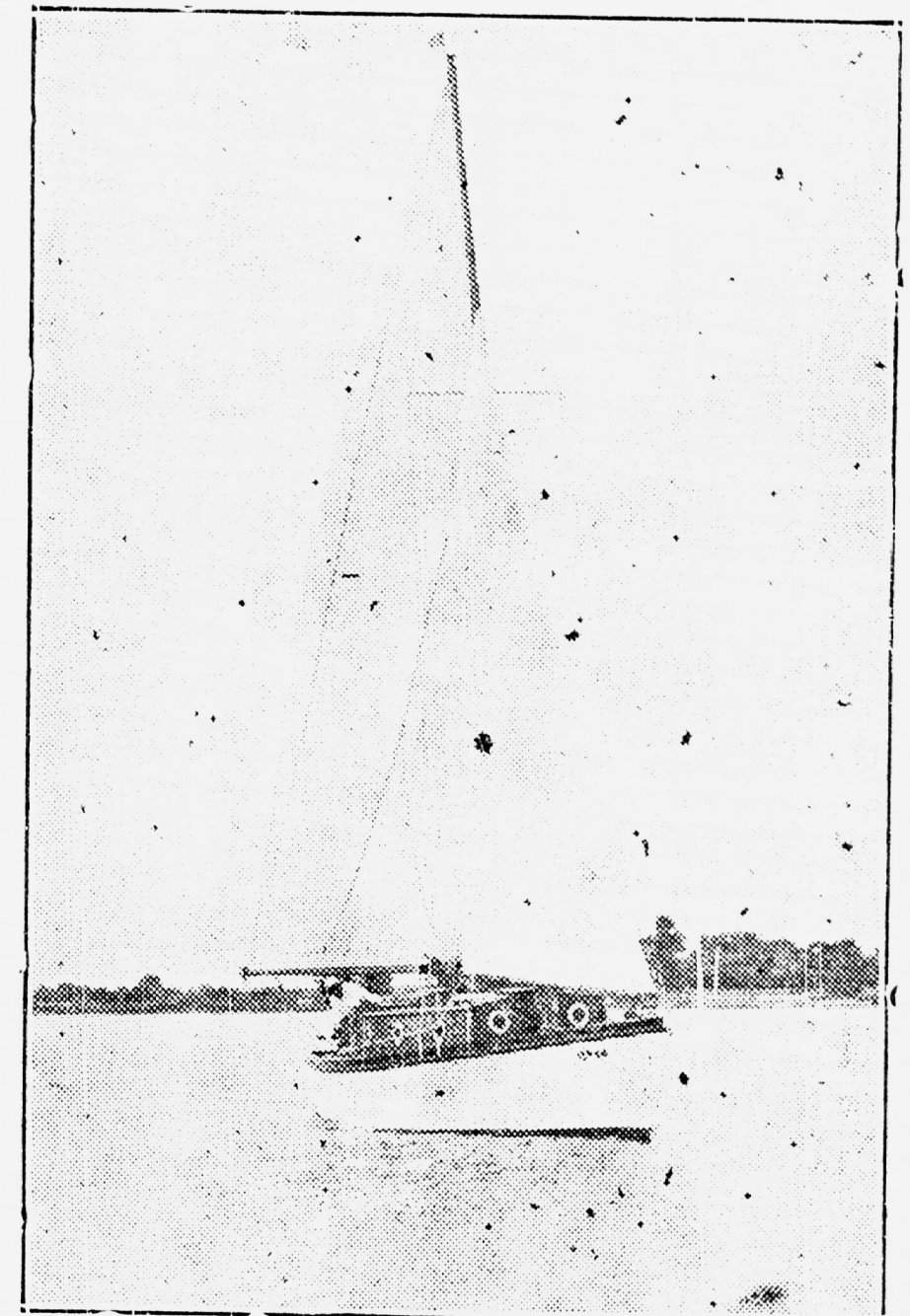
## WILLIAMSBURG CLUB TO ATTEND BANQUET

At a recent meeting of the Williamsburg 4-H Club girls, arrangements were made to attend the 4-H Club banquet, to be held Saturday in Zion Church, Cambridge.

The banquet will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 P. M. and all 4-H girls and others interested are welcome to attend.

The meeting of the Williamsburg club was presided over by Lucinda Holloway, president.

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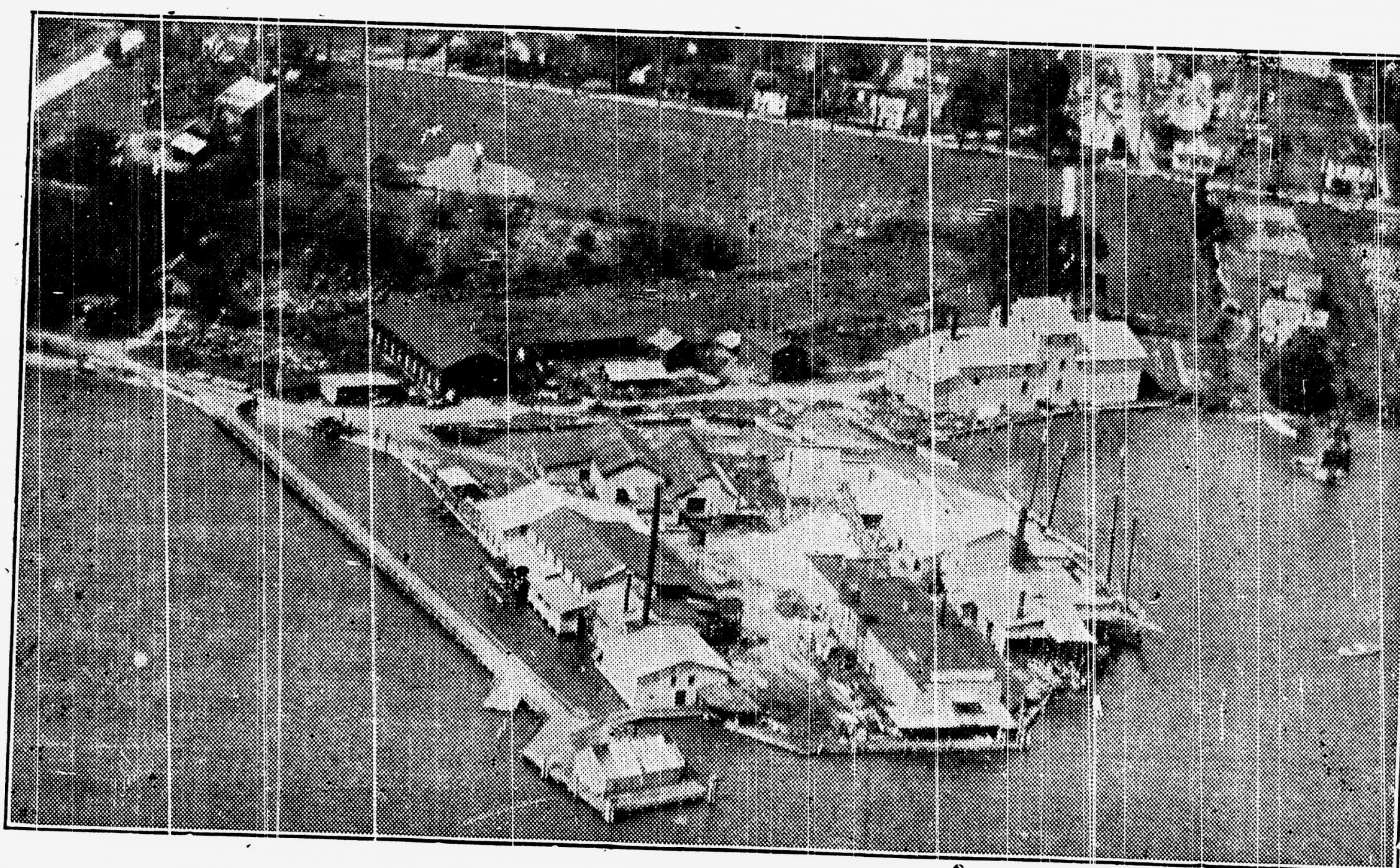
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